

Delay In Implementing the Prasar Bharati Act.

606. SHRI VISHWANATH SHASTRI:
SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN:
SHRIMATIGEETA MUKHERJEE:
SHRI RAJENDRA KUMAR SHARMA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been inordinate delay in implementing the Prasar Bharati Act, 1990; and

(b) if so, the reasons for delay and steps being taken for its implementation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) and (b). Many essential formalities need to be completed and various steps taken before the Prasar Bharati can be established. Ministry is seized of the issue and the Government remains committed for the same.

[Translation]

Demand to Withdraw Hike in Prices of Imported Paper.

607. SHRI SIMON MARANDI:
SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether representatives of various Newspaper Organisations have demanded the withdrawal of the hike made in the prices of imported and indigenous newsprint;

(b) if so, the action taken by Government so far with regard to withdrawal of the hike in prices of the imported and indigenous newsprint;

(c) the criteria adopted for supplying newsprint to the newspaper industries; and

(d) the names of the states in which the criteria is being followed from January, 1991 till date?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) So far as the hike in prices of imported newsprint on account of rolling of credits by State Trading Corporation and devaluation is concerned, the matter has been resolved and decision in this regard was announced in Lok Sabha on 20.8.1991. There is, at present, no statutory control over the prices of indigenous newsprint which are determined by commercial market factors whereas prices of imported newsprint depend on procurement price contracted by State Trading Corporation.

(c) Newsprint is allocated by the Registrar of Newspapers for India to the newspapers as per Newsprint Allocation Policy announced by Government from time to time. Thereafter the supplies are made by indigenous newsprint mills and State Trading Corporation accordingly.

(d) The Newsprint Allocation Policy applies to all newspapers published in the country, irrespective of State or Union Territory.

Deployment of Army in Assam

608. SHRI SIMON MARANDI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have deployed army in several districts of Assam for controlling the activities of United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA);

(b) if so, the names of such districts and since when army has been deployed therein;

(c) the details of monthly expenditure incurred on it so far;

(d) the steps taken by the Government for the permanent solution of ULFA problem and the result thereof; and

(e) the details of number of persons killed, injured seriously and kidnapping done by ULFA since 1 July, 1991?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) and (b). The entire State of Assam stands declared as 'Disturbed Area' under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958. At the request of the State Government, the Army has been deployed in Assam in aid of the Civil Authority.

(c) The monthly expenditure on deployment of the Army in Assam is Rs. 6.3. crores approximately.

(d) The State Government has time and again asked the ULFA to abjure violence, accept the Constitution of India, release the hostages and come to the negotiating table. To create a congenial atmosphere the State Government also released about 500 ULFA detenus.

(e) ULFA has been responsible for 142 violent incidents resulting in the death of 53 persons and injuries to 41 others, since 1st July, 1991. This includes 65 incidents of kidnapping in which 81 persons were kidnapped of whom 17 were killed.

S.T.D. in Headquarters of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh

609. SHRI VILASRAONAGNATHRAO GUNDEWAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the district headquarters in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh have been linked with S.T.D. facility; and

(b) if not, the time by which all the districts are likely to be provided S.T.D.

facility?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) By March, 1992.

[English]

Pension to Freedom Fighters of Gujarat

610. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some applications for grant of pension to Freedom Fighters received during January 1, 1989 to October 31, 1991 from Jamnagar and other districts of Gujarat were rejected;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of such freedom fighters of district Jamnagar who are getting pension?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) During the period only nine applications from the State of Gujarat including Jamnagar District have been rejected.

(b) These did not fulfill the eligibility criteria laid down in the Central Pension Scheme.

(c) As no application from freedom fighters of Jamnagar District has been received during the period the question of grant of pension to them does not arise.

[Translation]

Telephone Connections in Delhi

611. SHRI ARVIND NETAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state: